

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3192

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L JOHANNESBURG 0250

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, SF

SUBJ: MORE ON TUCSA SCHISM PLUS RECOMMENDATION FOR ACTION

1. IN WIDE-RANGING TWO HOUR CONVERSATION MARCH 12 TUCSA GENERAL SECRETARY GROBBELAAR TOLD REGIONAL LABOR OFFICER (RLO) THAT ONE BASIC REASON FOR TUCSA'S SEEMING RELUCTANCE OR INABILITY TO IMPLEMENT MORE RAPIDLY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF LAST AUGUST TO ORGANIZE "PARALLEL" BLACK UNIONS (ONE OF MORE IMPORTANT POINTS AT ISSUE BETWEEN TUCSA AND DURBAN DISSIDENTS) IS THAT, DURING PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, SENTIMENT AMONG ASIAN AND COLOURED TRADE UNIONISTS (WHO COMPRISE MAJORITY OF OVERALL MEMBERSHIP OF TUCSA-AFFILIATED UNIONS) HAS TURNED DRAMATICALLY AGAINST IDEA OF ORGANIZING BLAKKE.

2. GROBBELAAR SAID ASIAN TRADE UNIONISTS IN DURBAN AREA IN PARTICULAR BEGAN SOME TIME AGO TO VIEW WITH REAL ALARM AND RESENTMENT SPECTACLE OF HARRIET BOLTON AND ASSOCIATES DEVOTING VIRTUALLY ALL OF THEIR TIME AND ENERGIES TO ORGANIZING BLACKS RATHER THAN ATTENDING TO NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF EXISTING, LARGELY ASIAN, MEMBERSHIP.

3. WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT BOLTON AND ASSOCIATES HAVE PROBABLY
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EVOKED CONSIDERABLE SYMPATHY IN INTERNATIOFAL TRADE UNION CIRCLES,

TO DETRIMENT OF TUCSAG'S CREDIBILITY AND REPUTATION, GROBBELAAR POINTED OUT THAT TUCEA, NEVERTHELESS, HAS BEEN MOVING AS RAPIDLY AS INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL OBSTACLES HAVE PERMITTED IN DIRECTION OF EDUCATING AND ORGANIZING BLACK WORKERS. IN THIS CONNECTION HE HANDED RLO COPY OF MEMORANDUM DATED FEBRUARY, 1974 FROM TUCSA EDUCATION COMMITTEE TO NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WHICH OUTLINES TUCSA'S PLANS FOR CARRYING OUT EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR TUKSA- D SPONSORED WORKERS OF ALL RACES (INCLUDING UP TO 50 PERCENT BLACKS) ON COUNTRY-WIDE BASIS. GROBBELAAR SAID HE KNEW PRESSURE WAS ON TUCSA TO MAKE VERY SIGNIFICANT DEMONSTRABLE PROGRESS WITH PROGRAMS PRIOR TO FACING LEADERS, MEMBERSHIP, PRESS AND PUBLIC AT NEXT ANNUAL CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST IN CAPE TOWN.

4. GROBBELAAR MADE ONE POINT DURING CONVERSATION WHICH WE FIND DISTURBING AND UNCONVINCING. HE SAID TUCSA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HAD SOUND REASONS FOR TAKING SAG AT ITS WORD THAT IT BANNED 4 DURBAN ZRADE UNIONISTS FOR OFFENSES WHICH HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THEIR ACTIVITIES AS TRADE UNIONISTS AND FOR BELIEVING THAT SAG WOULD PROBABLY BE ABLE TO MAKE CHARGES STAND UP IN COURT IF IT WERE TO TAKE TUCSA'S ADVICE AND BRING FORMAL CHARGES. HE PRODUCED NO EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THIS POINT BUT SAID HE WAS AWARE THAT SEEMINGLY PRO-SAG POSITION TUCSA HAS TAKEN ON BANNINGS PROBABLY UNEXPLAINABLE TO OUTSIDE CRITICS NO MATTER WHAT EFFORTS TUCSA MADE TO EXPLAIN IT.

5. RECOMMENDATION: THAT DESPITE IMPRESSIONS MANY OUTSIDE OBSERVERS HAVE PROBABLY FORMED ON BASIS OF NEWSPAPER REPORTS ON TUCSA SCHISM, SITUATION IS EXTREMELY COMPLEX, AND POST BELIEVES AFL-CIO AND OTHER RESPONSIBLE ELEMENTS IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION MOVEMENT WOULD BE WELL-ADVISED TO RESIST TEMPTATION AT THIS EARLY STAGE OF GAME TO THROW "BABY", I.E. TUCSA, OUT WITH "BATHWATER", I.E. TUCSA'S SEEMINGLY AMBIVALENT POSITIONS ON ORGANIZING BLACKS AND DURBAN BANNINGS. IN CIRCUMSTANCES, POST SUGGESTS THAT DEPARTMENT MIGHT WISH TO CONVEY SUBSTANCE OF THIS MESSAGE TO APPROPRIATE PEOPLE WITHIN AFL-CIO. GDS
FOLEY

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